



AUMC WITNESS

Our Mission: Love God, Love Neighbor, Serve the World

Annandale United Methodist Church
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Rev. Cynthia Johnson-Oliver

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We are a Stephen Ministry Church

November 17, 2015

MAGNIFY AND REJOICE

*"My soul magnifies the Lord, and
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior..."*

- Luke 1:46-47

I have been told that the measure of a truly great sermon is how well people remember it. By that measure, one of my most beloved sermons at AUMC was titled, "There's Something About Mary." Delivered during Advent 2008 (...perhaps it's time to reprise it?), the sermon compared Catholic and Protestant views on Mary, the mother of Jesus. On the one hand, Catholics revere Mary as the Theotokos, or God-bearer. They pray to her, have feast days to commemorate her, and have beautiful iconography to honor her role in salvation history. Protestants, in an expression of disagreement, went too far to the other extreme and have practically ignored Mary altogether. In the Protestant liturgical calendar, Mary is relegated to one Sunday a year (the fourth Sunday in Advent), and otherwise portrayed only in a Christmas pageant or mentioned on Good Friday. In my sermon, I offered a middle path: Mary is as worthy of our attention, study, and honor as any other biblical figure, from the patriarchs to the apostles, and perhaps more so. By preaching, studying, and meditating on the life of Mary, we just might learn her role in Christian history, follow her example of servanthood, and be elevated by her worship of God.

This year's Advent Study gives us the opportunity to do just that. The Academy of Discipleship is pleased to offer Advent Study 2015 - *Not a Silent Night: Mary Looks Back to Bethlehem* by Adam Hamilton. This book invites readers to imagine Jesus from Mary's point of view. In an unorthodox approach, *Not a Silent Night* begins at the end, with Mary's later life, then at the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus; then through Jesus' life and ministry, and ends at the beginning, with the Christ child born in a stable.

(Continued on page 2)

Advent Activity Schedule

- Sun., Nov. 29,** 10:30 a.m., *Hanging of the Greens* worship service; 9:30 a.m., Sunday School, 12 p.m., Church-wide lunch and decorate the church.
- Wed., Dec. 2,** 6 p.m., *Wednesday Night Together* dinner; 6:30 p.m. Advent Worship and Communion, Advent Fair.
- Sun., Dec. 6,** 10:30 a.m., *Lessons and Carols* worship service; 9:30 a.m., Sunday School; 6:30 p.m., Navy Sea Chanters Christmas Concert.
- Wed., Dec. 9,** 6:30 p.m., *Advent Worship* and Communion.
- Sat., Dec. 12,** *Children's Pageant rehearsal*, 10 – 11:30 a.m. (4 yrs. – 5th grade)
- Sun., Dec. 13,** 8:30 and 11 a.m., *Children's Christmas Pageant*. 6:30 p.m., *An Evening in December* - Christmas Recital.
- Wed., Dec. 16,** 6 p.m., *Wednesday Night Together* dinner; 6:30 p.m. Christmas music sing-along, Advent Worship and Communion
- Sun., Dec. 20,** 8:30 and 11 a.m., *Worship*, Fourth Sunday in Advent.
6:30 p.m., *A Brethren Christmas Concert*, tickets \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door.
- Thurs., Dec. 24,** *Christmas Eve*, 4 p.m. Candlelight Worship for families/children; 7 and 11 p.m. Candlelight Worship.

Advent Study & Sermon Series
NOT A SILENT NIGHT:
MARY LOOKS BACK TO BETHLEHEM
 by Adam Hamilton

Nov. 29: Beginning with the End (Dr. Brown)
 Dec. 6: The Piercing of Mary's Soul (Rev. Johnson-Oliver)
 Dec. 13: Amazed, Astounded, Astonished (Dr. Brown)
 Dec. 20: Mary, Full of Grace (Rev. Carrillo)
 Dec. 24: It Was Not a Silent Night (All pastors preach)

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Poinsettias for Christmas

To place a poinsettia in the Sanctuary in honor or memory of a loved one on Dec. 24, please complete the form below and return it to the church office with your check for \$11 per plant **by Sunday, Dec. 6.**

Please use a separate form for each plant ordered.

No telephone orders will be accepted. Make checks payable to AUMC.

Poinsettia given by: _____

Phone: _____

Amount enclosed: _____

In memory/honor of: _____

(Check one) I will take the poinsettia Give poinsettia to shut-ins

(Continued from page 1)

According to Hamilton, "No one was closer to Jesus than Mary. No one shaped his life like she did. No one knew him better nor loved him more. And no human being paid a greater price for his birth, life and death." Thus, to see Advent and Christmas through Mary's eyes is to draw closer to her precious child.

This Advent, just as Mary was present with the other disciples in the upper room (Acts 1:14), so also, we invite you to spend this season in study, prayer, and worship, magnifying the Lord and rejoicing in God our Savior.

The Advent sermon series begins on November 29. The following classes are participating in Advent Study 2015:

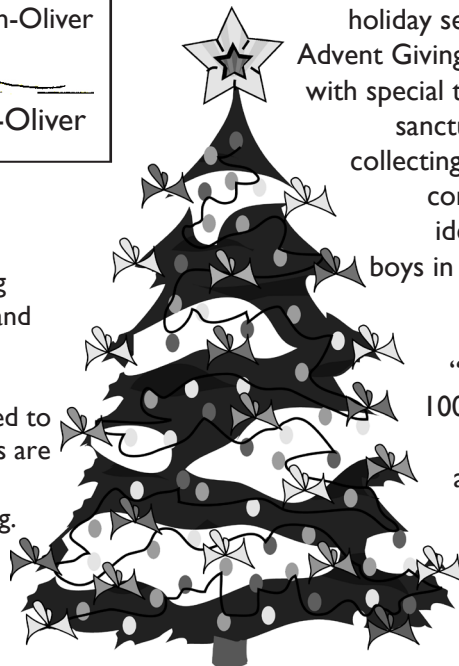
- Exploring Faith meets Sundays at 9:45 in room 303.
- Immanuel meets Sundays at 9:45 in room 300.
- In his Steps meets Sundays at 9:45 in room 302.
- Parents and Promises meets Sundays at 9:45 in room 310.
- Women of the Day meets Sundays at 9:45 in the parlor.

Blessings,

Rev. Cynthia Johnson-Oliver

Cynthia Johnson-Oliver
Rev. Cynthia Johnson-Oliver

Hanging of the Greens, a worship service of preparation for Christ's coming, will held on Sunday, Nov. 29, at 10:30 a.m. The service will include hanging greenery traditionally associated with everlasting life and special music on the first Sunday in Advent. A single worship service will be held that day, followed by a church-wide lunch! Following lunch, everyone is invited to help decorate the church for the season. Reservations are requested for lunch; contact the church office at 703-256-8330 or email jkitzmiller@annandale-umc.org. The menu Nov. 29 will be ham, applesauce, Caesar salad, mac 'n cheese, green beans, rolls and butter, dessert. A love offering will be taken.



AUMC's Children's

Christmas Pageant, the Story of Christmas, will be held during both worship services on Sunday, Dec. 13.

The pageant is open to infants through 5th grade. Costumes will be provided and children are not required to memorize lines. A mandatory rehearsal is scheduled for Saturday morning, Dec. 12. Register by Nov. 22 online at www.annandale-umc.org. For details, contact Becki Stewart, 703-256-8330 or bstewart@annandale-umc.org.

Wednesday Night Together fellowship dinners and programs will be held on Wednesdays, Dec. 2 and 16, at 6 p.m. Register for dinner on the pew pad on Sundays or by noon on the prior Monday by contacting Joyce Kitzmiller: jkitzmiller@annandale-umc.org or calling 703-256-8330.

On Dec. 2, the program will be an *Advent Fair* and the menu will be: Caesar salad, baked ziti, meatballs, garlic bread, and cherry cheesecake pie for dessert, and for children: penne pasta and red sauce. On Dec. 16, the program will be *Christmas Music Sing-along* and the menu will be: salad, baked potato bar, vegetable casserole, crescent rolls and sherbet and Christmas cookies for dessert; for children: crescent rolled hot dogs and tater tots. The meal price is \$8 per person, \$4 for children under 9, and \$25 per family maximum. Every Wednesday during Advent, worship and communion will be held at 6:30 p.m.

Advent Giving Tree

Deliver hope to children, families in need, the homeless, and victims of human trafficking this holiday season by participating in AUMC's Advent Giving Tree. Look for Christmas trees with special tags near the center doors of the sanctuary. The Missions Committee is collecting gift items and donations for our community, including: \$15-\$25 gifts identified for pre-teen and teenage boys in the Rising Hope angels program.

Gifts should be unwrapped and brought to AUMC by Dec. 6. "Alternative Giving" donations to 100,000 Homes; the food programs at the Heritage Drive campus and Safe Haven; and to victims of human trafficking. The deadline for Alternative Giving is Dec. 20. For details contact Gary Sherfey 571-278-3099.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Thanksgiving Gift Bags: AUMC Caring Ministries is preparing to assemble Thanksgiving Gift Bags for our homebound members, and volunteers are needed to assemble the bags and to deliver the gifts. Sign up to deliver a gift bag using the list of recipients on a table in the Atrium. Our shut-in members appreciate the visit as much as the gift! Volunteers are also needed to assemble the Thanksgiving Gift Bags on Saturday, Nov. 21, at 10 a.m. in room 210. For details, call Jane Underhill at 703-573-2056. Completed bags will be ready for volunteers to pick up on Sunday, Nov. 22, for delivery before Thanksgiving, Nov. 26.

New Member Class Brownies with Brown will meet Nov. 22 and 29 at 9:45 a.m. in room 212C. The class, taught by Rev. Dr. Clarence Brown, Jr., is a time of exploration and discernment of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ at Annandale UMC. Topics will range from Wesleyan Theology to United Methodism 101; from Stewardship to Spiritual Gifts. Pre-registration is not necessary. Brownies with Brown will not meet in December. For details, call 703-256-8330.

Young Adults will meet Nov. 22, Dec. 6 and 20 at 12:30 p.m. in Room 210 (lunch provided).

Charge Conference: A Charge Conference will be held at AUMC on Wednesday, Dec. 2, at 7:30 p.m. All members are welcome to attend.

Times are tight; help AUMC save postage and paper costs! Sign up to receive the monthly Witness newsletter via email instead of USPS mail by contacting Dottie Rogerson, drogerson@annandale-umc.org or call 703-256-8330. AUMC does not share its email lists.

Christmas wreaths will be sold by Boy Scout Troop 150 before and after Sunday services until they are sold out. This is the troop's only fundraiser each year, and your support is appreciated. All funds go toward camping trips, Scout events, and troop equipment.

Volunteer as a tutor or reader, snack provider or administrative helper for AUMC's Tutoring Program on Wednesdays from 3:45 – 5:45 p.m. at the Heritage Campus, 7901 Heritage Drive. The program focuses on homework and reading for students who attend Braddock and Annandale Terrace Elementary and Poe Intermediate schools. Contact Jerry Beyer, 703-399-1395 to serve in the tutoring program or for more information.

Feed the hungry: the ACCA food pantry needs to be restocked. Sunday, Dec. 6, is collection Sunday for ACCA. The Heritage campus food distribution collection Sunday is Dec. 20. Bring boxes and cans of non-perishable food to the Atrium on those Sundays.

Come to the Advent Fair! Everyone is invited to the Advent Fair, on Wednesday, Dec. 2 (following Wednesday Night Together fellowship dinner). Everyone can make an Advent Wreath to take home (materials provided) and learn about Alternative Giving opportunities. Separate registration is required for Advent Fair and WNT dinner. Make reservations by contacting Joyce Kitzmiller: jkitzmiller@annandale-umc.org or 703-256-8330 and when you make a reservation, indicate how many will attend for each activity. Questions about the Advent Fair? Contact Becki Stewart, Director of Children's Ministries, 703-256-8330 or bstewart@annandale-umc.org.

Help distribute food to neighbors in need every Thursday, 5-7 p.m., at Heritage campus. Both stand up and sit down tasks available.

Buy pecans, help UMW Missions! United Methodist Women is selling a new crop of pecans (whole and in pieces) and walnuts after each Sunday worship service. To reserve a case of 24 or to make a special request, contact Sally Bizer at 703-256-3373 or Joni Laurence at 703-941-7481. Make checks payable to AUMW.

A hypothermia relief center for the homeless is being hosted by AUMC Nov. 29 - Dec. 6. Volunteers are needed for a variety of tasks; new this year: someone with a sewing machine to make simple clothing repairs, someone to provide haircuts, a seated massage, to play guitar or piano and sing one night, and other skills that might be helpful for our guests. Sign up in the Atrium. Be sure to stop by "Homeless Harry", who will be hanging out in the sanctuary and narthex with sticky notes attached that will request specific needs. Did you know that \$20 will provide enough money to load a one week bus pass for unlimited Metro rides and a \$5 will buy a fast food gift card for a guest? For more information, contact AUMC's Hypothermia Coordinator, Cyndi Jones, 571-212-8824 or cyndij123@verizon.net.

CIRCLE NEWS

DEBORAH: Tues., Dec. 8, 11 a.m., AUMC Wright Hall. Providing a Christmas Luncheon for AUMC office staff.

LYDIA: Thurs., Dec. 10, 11 a.m., Clyde's Restaurant Christmas Luncheon.

MARTHA: Mon., Dec. 14, 1 p.m., Heritage Campus Fellowship Hall. Prog.: Study of The Women of Christmas.

M&M's: Sat., Dec. 12, 5:30 p.m. at the home of Debbi Iwig. Annual Christmas potluck. Friends and spouses welcome.

SARAH ELIZABETH: Sun., Dec. 15, 1 p.m., AUMC Rm. 209. Prog.: TBA.

Visitors and guests are welcome at all circles!

MINISTRY MEETINGS

| | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|-----------|----------|
| Tues., Nov. 24 | SPRC | 7 p.m. | Room 210 |
| Tues, Dec. 1 | Trustees | 7:30 p.m. | Room 303 |
| Wed., Dec. 2 | Stephen Ministry | 7:30 p.m. | Room 303 |
| Tues., Dec. 8 | Finance Committee | 7 p.m. | Room 210 |
| Tues., Dec. 8 | Missions Committee | 7 p.m. | Room 302 |
| Tues., Dec. 15 | Church Council | 7:15 p.m. | Room 302 |

Ushers are needed: Women, men, or youth are needed to serve as ushers for the 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. worship services once a month (or less frequently if more volunteer). The need is greatest for the 8:30 service. Please contact Randy Gordon, rgordon@ngfa.org or call the church office 703-256-8330.

AUMC WITNESS

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Send address changes to:

Annandale United Methodist Church

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COMING IN 2016

The State of the Dream II

Jan. 17, 12:30 p.m., Wright Hall

The congregation will again gather to reflect on Dr. King's dream. We will also reflect how well we as a church, community, and nation are honoring the dream. Join us as we hear reflections and together envision the beloved community.

Holy Spirit Retreat

Jan. 22-23

Who is the Holy Spirit? What does the Holy Spirit do? How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit? Join AUMC pastors and staff as we explore these questions in a spirit-filled retreat. This follow up to the Alpha study will explore the meaning and significance of the Holy Spirit in our lives. This church-wide event for ages 12 and up will inspire us for the new year!

Women's Retreat

Apr. 29 - May 1

Registration forms are now being accepted. Space is limited, so register early with a \$40 deposit. The key-note speaker will be United Methodist Minister Rev. Debra Colbert Cline who will bring an energetic message of "Be Strong in the Lord and His Mighty Power". For more information stop by the Women's Retreat Table after each Sunday worship service or email Cyra Doty at radu94@aol.com.

WEEKLY VOLUNTEERS

Sunday, Nov. 22

Door greeters: 8:10 J. Maxwell, K. Redden;

9:30 D. Ruhter;

10:30 D. Johnson

Welcome Desk: 8:30 R. Sayre, N. Sayre; 11 J. Brooks

Fellowship hour: Kairos Prison Ministry

Ushers: 8:30 a.m. J. Clarke, A. Cogswell, R. Gordon,

E. McKenney (c)

11 a.m. C. Jones, C. Jones, P. Adams, R. Gordon (c)

Sunday, Nov. 29

Door greeters: 8:10 a.m. S. Fleming, R. Hampton;

9:30 a.m. B. Otto;

10:30 a.m. D. Johnson

Welcome Desk: 8:30 S. Kenski;

11 a.m. A. Lohr

Ushers: 8:30 a.m. S. Naugle, K. Sabo, S. Kenski, S. Fleming (c)

11 a.m. R. Gallagher, C. Perdue, P. Snitzer,

P. Shockley (c)

Sunday, Dec. 6

Door greeters: 8:10 a.m. J. Vance, S. Naugle;

9:30 a.m. M. Pearson;

10:30 a.m. W. Ward

Ushers: 8:30 a.m. S. Chase, J. Haymaker, G. Sherfey,

P. Sherfey (c)

11 a.m. C. Jones, C. Jones, J. Thomas, P. Adams (c)

Sunday, Dec. 13

Door greeters: 8:10 a.m. E. Wilson, C. Cox;

9:30 a.m. D. Ruhter;

10:30 a.m. D. Johnson

Ushers: 8:30 a.m. S. Kenski, S. Naugle, K. Sabo,

E. McKenney (c)

11 a.m. W. Annan, S. Fleming, G. Rothman,

R. Gordon (c)

NEXT DEADLINE:

Friday, Dec. 4 is the deadline for the Dec. 15 Witness which covers Dec. 20, 24, and 27, and Jan. 3, 10, and 17.